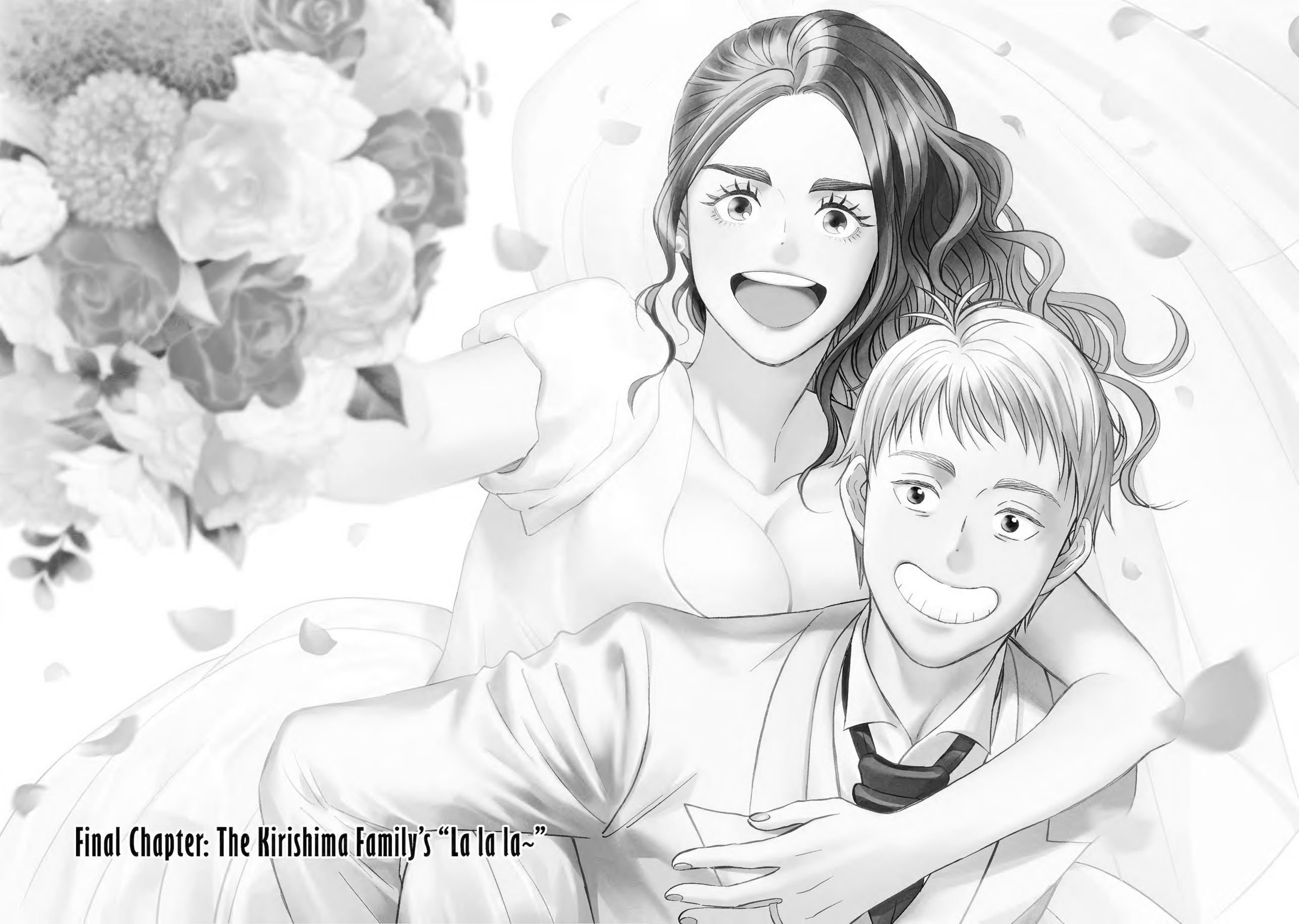
HELLO? WHERE ARE YOU RIGHT NOW?
I'M ABOUT TO GET ON THE TRAIN.
WHAAAT?! YOU HAVEN'T TAKEN THE TRAIN YET?!!
I'M SORRY...

KIRISHIMA JUN (26)
I HAD A MEETING I JUST COULDN'T MISS...
GEEEZ!

WHAT'RE WE GONNA DO IF YOU'RE LATE, BIG BRO?!
THE BRIDE IS ALL READY TO GO OVER HERE!
KIRISHIMA MIU (11)



Final Chapter: The Kirishima Family's "La la la~"

OH?!
...THE WAY YOU'RE SPEAKING, IT ALMOST SOUNDS LIKE YOUR BIG BROTHER IS THE ONE GETTING MARRIED.
WOOOW! YOU LOOK WONDERFUL, FATHER...!
THE GROOM IS ALL SET TOO!
WELL, MOST COUPLES HAVE THEIR CEREMONY BEFORE THEIR CHILDREN ARE BORN...
I'M SOOO HAPPY!
I CAN'T BELIEVE I GET TO SEE MY PARENTS' WEDDING!
Squeeze...
INDEED. TODAY...

ALBEIT MANY YEARS LATE, KIRISHIMA SHIROU AND KIRISHIMA AI ARE FINALLY HAVING THEIR WEDDING CEREMONY.

HUH?!

WHERE DO YOU KEEP YOUR WEDDING PHOTOS?

A FEW MONTHS AGO...

"IT'S BEEN OVER TEN YEARS SINCE THEY GOT MARRIED, SO WHY IS IT ONLY HAPPENING NOW?" YOU ASK? WELL...

HEY...

WHAAAAT?! WHY NOT?!!

YEP. WE DIDN'T ...

WE DIDN'T HAVE A CEREMONY.

"WHY NOT?" WELL...

...

SO I WANNA SEE YOUR WEDDING PHOTOS TOO!

MIO-CHAN'S PARENTS HAD THEM ON DISPLAY IN THEIR HOME. THEY LOOKED REALLY WONDERFUL!

THE TWO OF US WERE SUPPOSED TO BREAK UP RIGHT AWAY.

I WANTED TO BECOME A DIVORCÉE.

...A DIVORCÉE? WHAT'S THAT?

IT MEANS SOMEONE WHO GOT MARRIED, DIVORCED, AND WENT BACK TO BEING SINGLE.

AI-SAN IS INCAPABLE OF LYING. NOTHING I CAN DO ABOUT THIS...

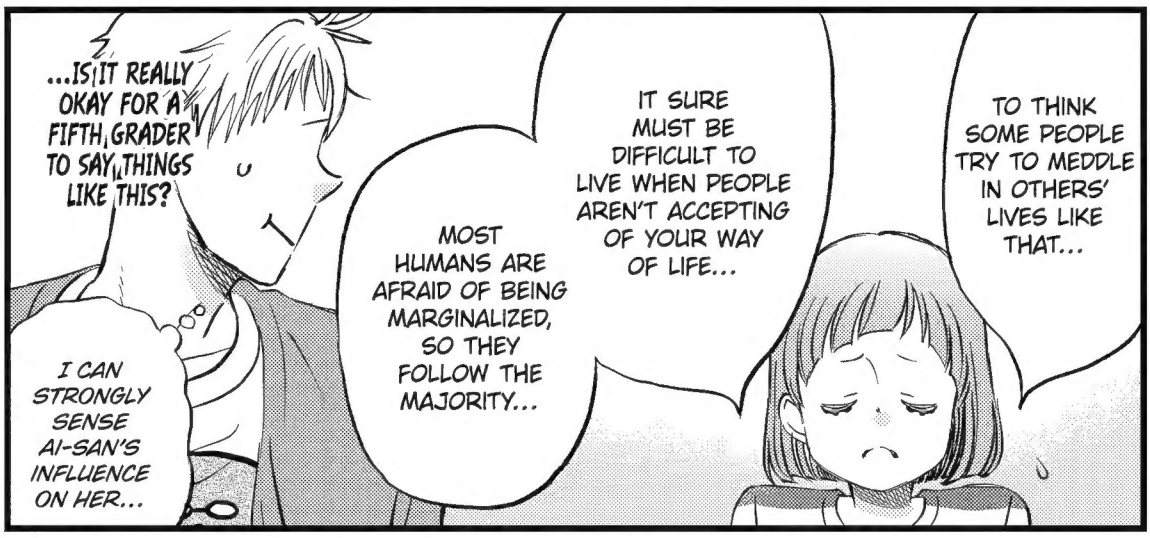
...I JUST HOPE MIU GROWS UP TO BE SOMEONE WHO UNDERSTANDS THE COMPLEXITIES OF ADULTHOOD.

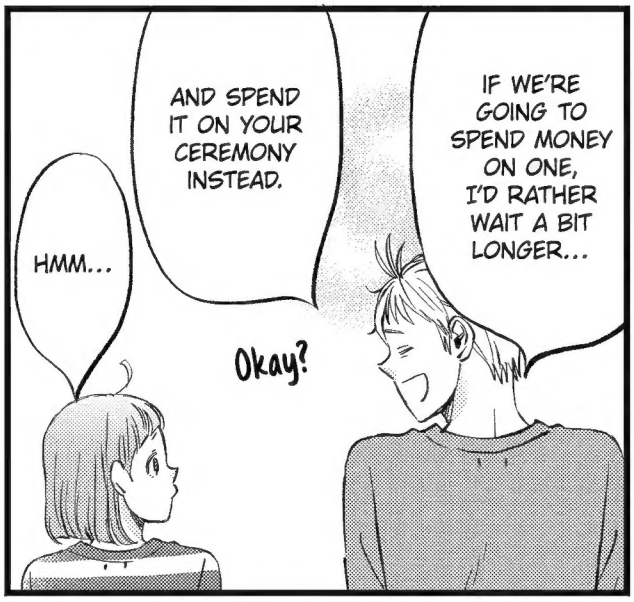
YOU SEE, THERE ARE A LOT OF PEOPLE IN THIS WORLD WHO THINK THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH YOU IF YOU DON'T GET MARRIED.

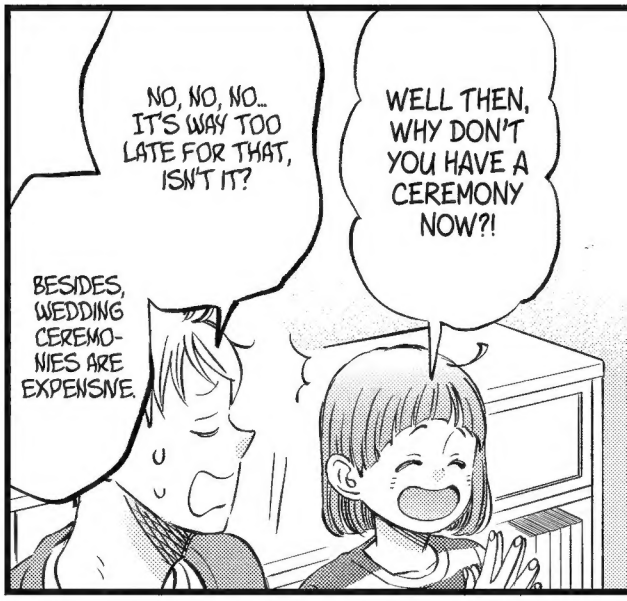
THEY NAG YOU ABOUT IT ALL THE TIME, SAYING THINGS LIKE, "WHY AREN'T YOU GETTING MARRIED?" OR "MARRIAGE IS A GOOD THING!"

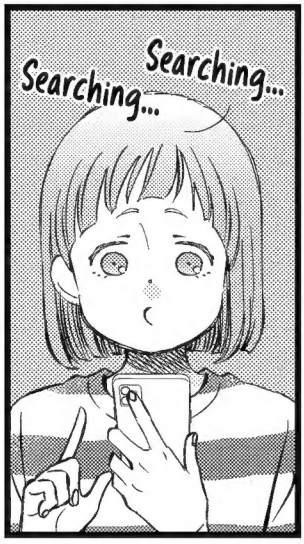
THAT CAN BE ANNOYING, SO I FELT LIKE GETTING MARRIED ONCE JUST TO SHUT THEM UP.

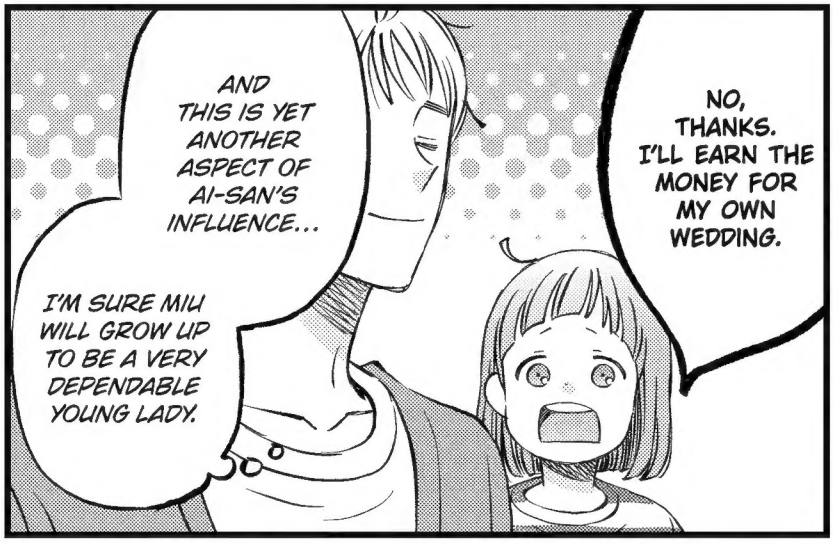
WHAAAAT ...?

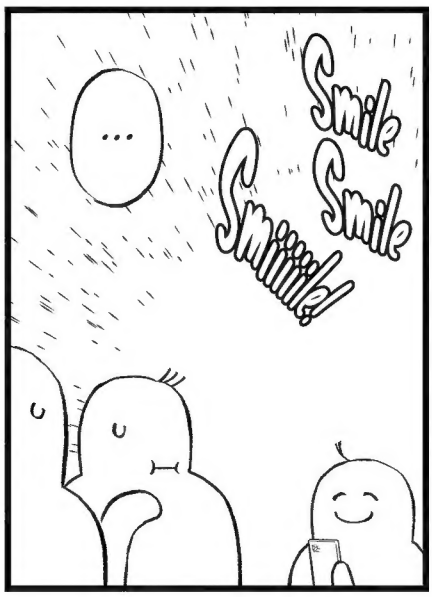

...IS IT REALLY OKAY FOR A FIFTH GRADER TO SAY THINGS LIKE THIS?
I CAN STRONGLY SENSE AI-SAN'S INFLUENCE ON HER...
MOST HUMANS ARE AFRAID OF BEING MARGINALIZED, SO THEY FOLLOW THE MAJORITY...
IT SURE MUST BE DIFFICULT TO LIVE WHEN PEOPLE AREN'T ACCEPTING OF YOUR WAY OF LIFE...
TO THINK SOME PEOPLE TRY TO MEDDLE IN OTHERS' LIVES LIKE THAT...

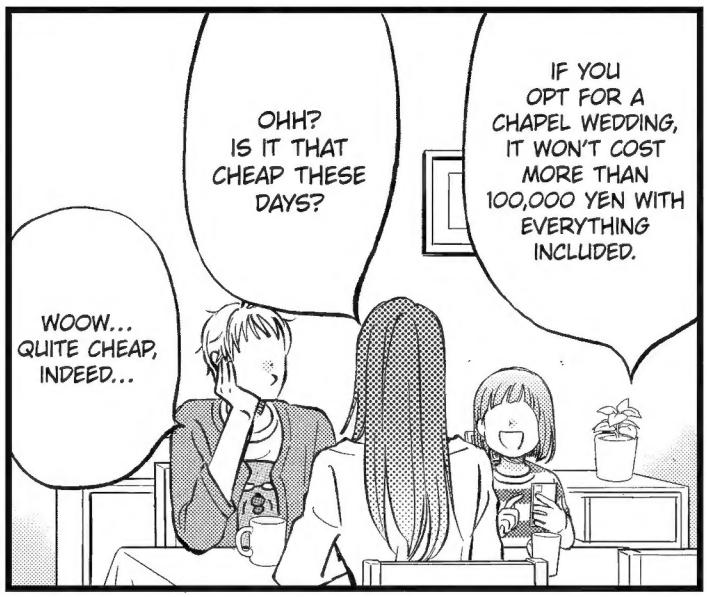

HMM...
AND SPEND IT ON YOUR CEREMONY INSTEAD.
IF WE'RE GOING TO SPEND MONEY ON ONE, I'D RATHER WAIT A BIT LONGER...
Okay?

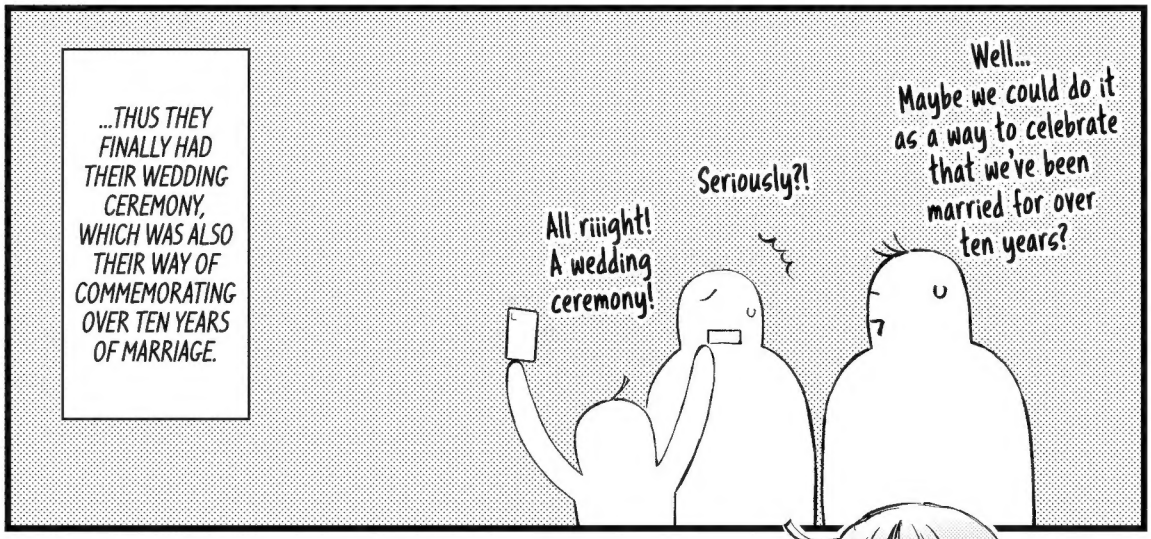

BESIDES, WEDDING CEREMONIES ARE EXPENSIVE.
NO, NO, NO... IT'S WAY TOO LATE FOR THAT, ISN'T IT?
WELL THEN, WHY DON'T YOU HAVE A CEREMONY NOW?!


Searching...
Searching...


I'M SURE MIU WILL GROW UP TO BE A VERY DEPENDABLE YOUNG LADY.
AND THIS IS YET ANOTHER ASPECT OF AI-SAN'S INFLUENCE...
NO, THANKS. I'LL EARN THE MONEY FOR MY OWN WEDDING.

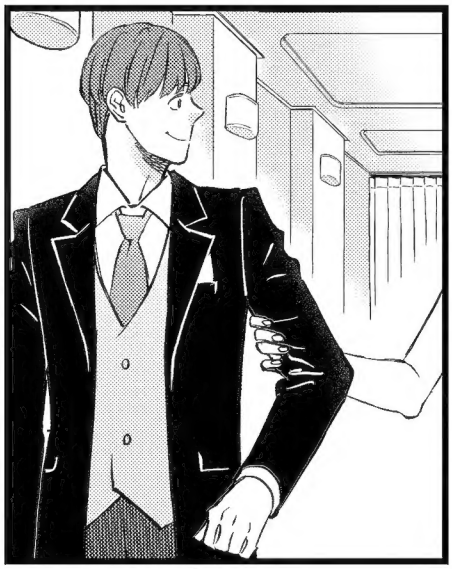

...
Smile
Smile
Smiiile!

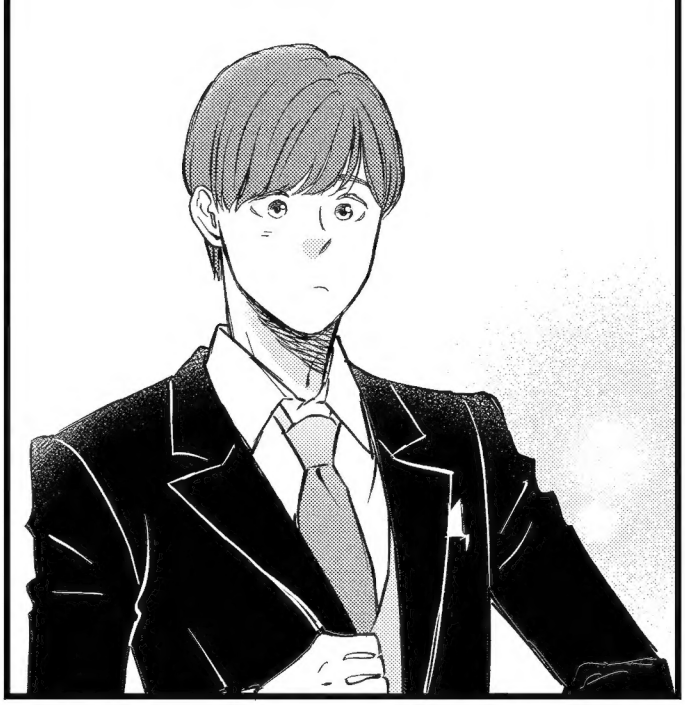

WOOW... QUITE CHEAP, INDEED...
OHH? IS IT THAT CHEAP THESE DAYS?
IF YOU OPT FOR A CHAPEL WEDDING, IT WON'T COST MORE THAN 100,000 YEN WITH EVERYTHING INCLUDED.

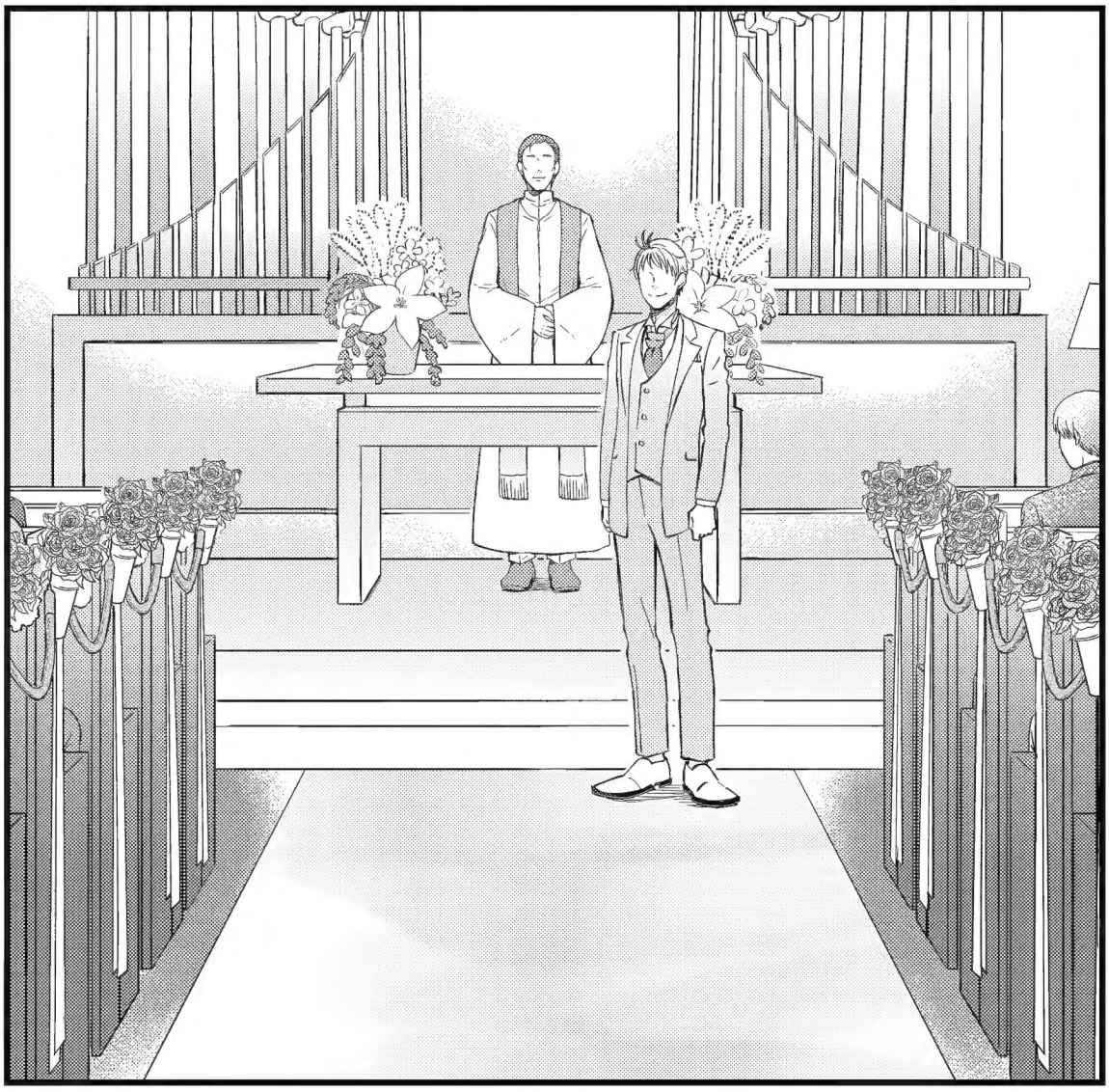

...THUS THEY FINALLY HAD THEIR WEDDING CEREMONY, WHICH WAS ALSO THEIR WAY OF COMMEMORATING OVER TEN YEARS OF MARRIAGE.
All riiight! A wedding ceremony!
Seriously?!
Well... Maybe we could do it as a way to celebrate that we've been married for over ten years?

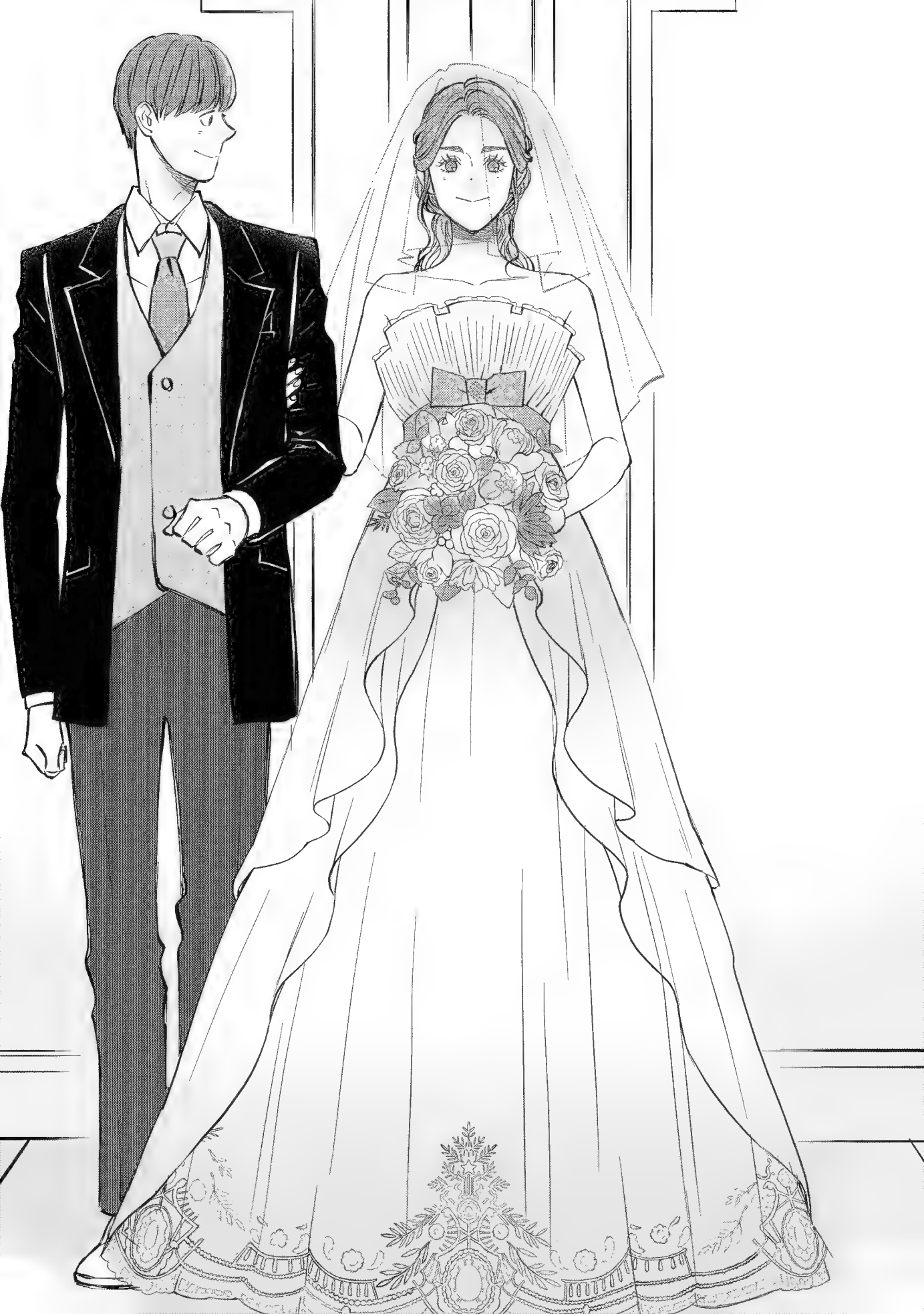
JUST BARELY! C'MON, HURRY UP AND CHANGE INTO THIS!
PHEW... I MADE IT...

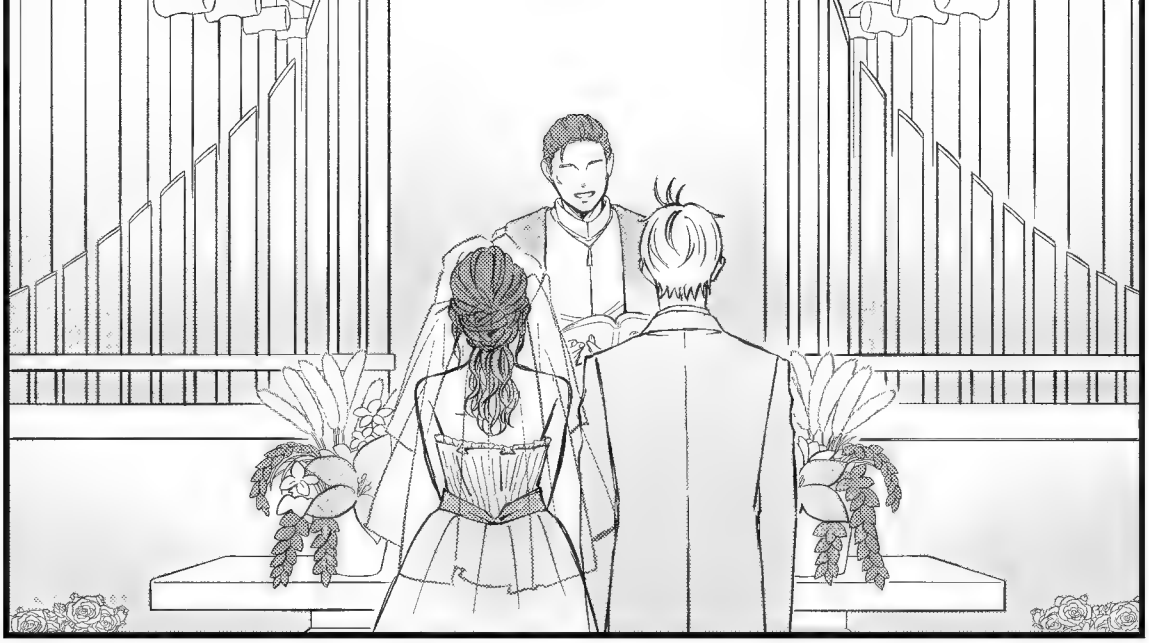
OH! YOU'RE HERE, BIG BRO!

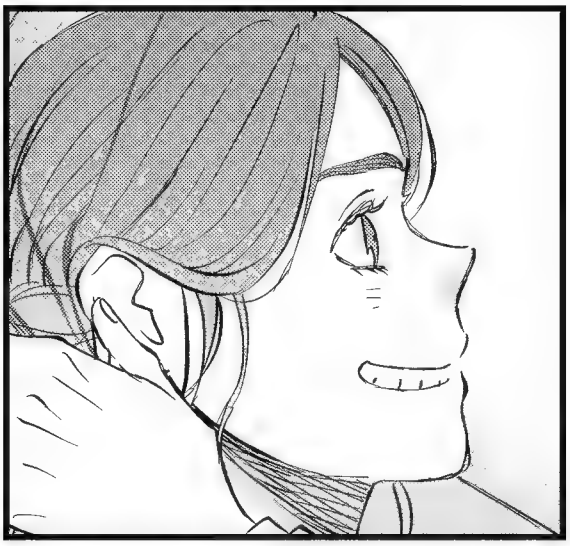


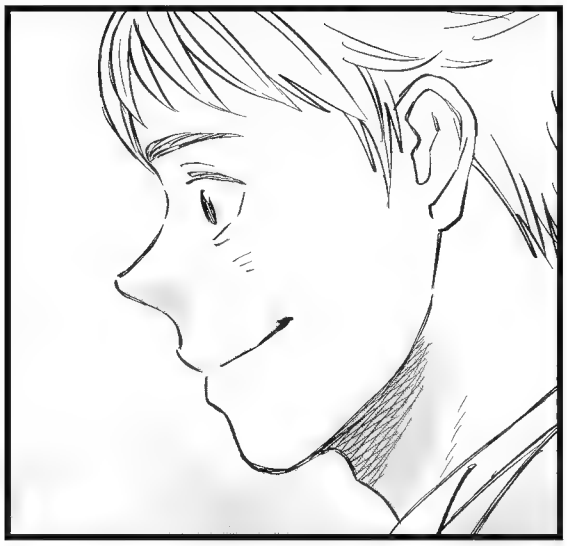


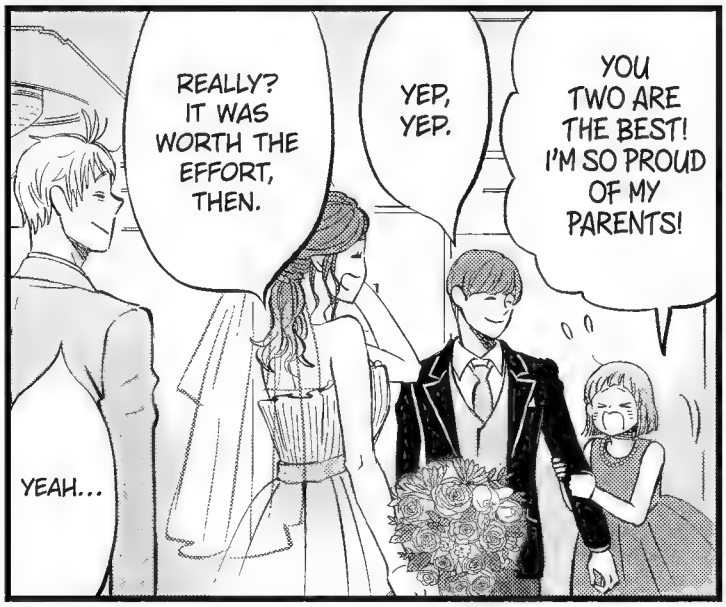








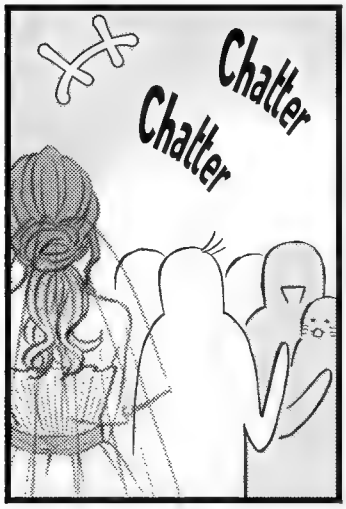


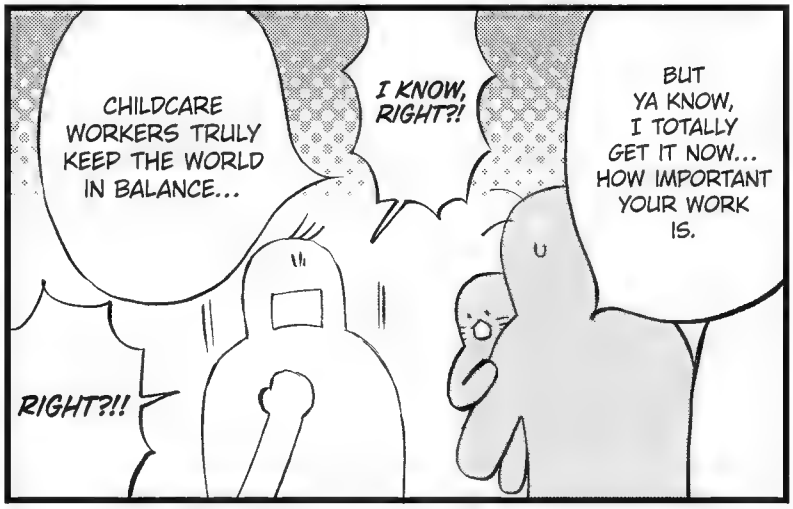

REALLY? IT WAS WORTH THE EFFORT, THEN.
YEP, YEP.
YOU TWO ARE THE BEST! I'M SO PROUD OF MY PARENTS!
YEAH...

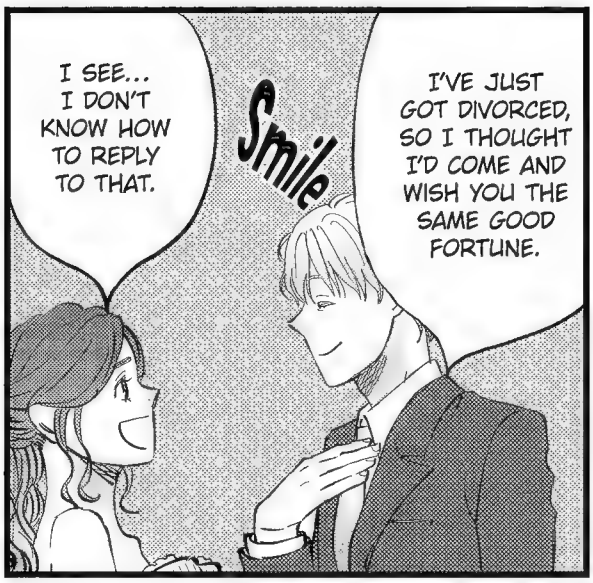
THAT WAS SOOOO NICE!

YOUR "CHILDCARE WORKER MODE" IS ALWAYS ON, HUH...?
WHOOAA! YOUR KID IS SUPER CUUUTE, KIKUCHI...!

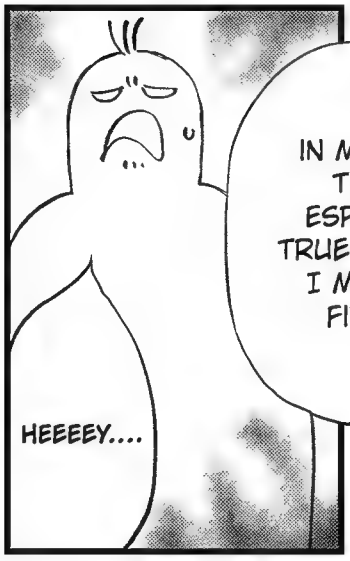
THANK YOU, GUYS! THANKS FOR COMING, DESPITE THE ODD TIMING OF THIS WEDDING CEREMONY...!
HEY, CONGRATS, MAN!


Chatter
Chatter

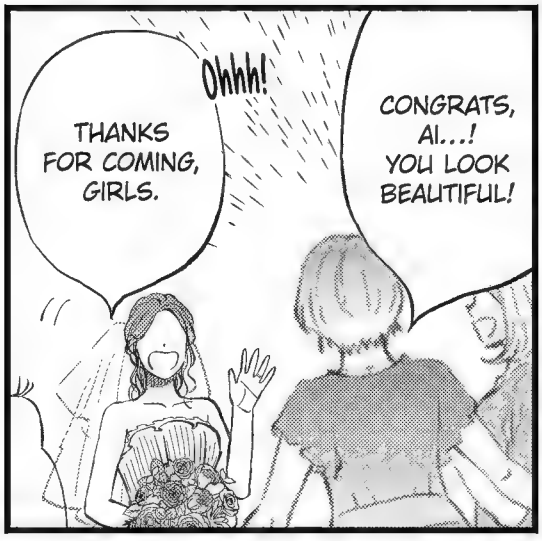

CHILDCARE WORKERS TRULY KEEP THE WORLD IN BALANCE...
I KNOW, RIGHT?!
BUT YA KNOW, I TOTALLY GET IT NOW... HOW IMPORTANT YOUR WORK IS.
RIGHT?!!


I SEE... I DON'T KNOW HOW TO REPLY TO THAT.
Smile
I'VE JUST GOT DIVORCED, SO I THOUGHT I'D COME AND WISH YOU THE SAME GOOD FORTUNE.

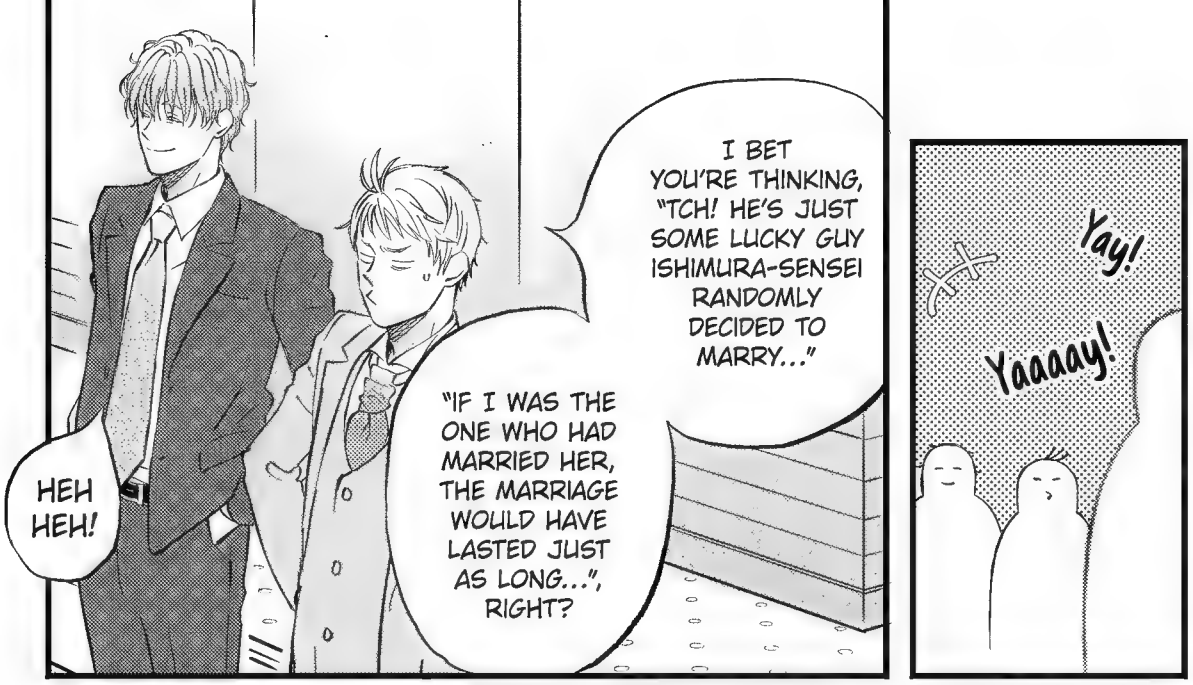
YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO TAKE TIME OUT OF YOUR BUSY SCHEDULE TO COME, SAIGA-SENSEI.
ONCE AGAIN, CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR WEDDING, ISHIMURA-SENSEI.
Oh!
NO, NO...


HEEEEY....

IN MY CASE, THIS IS ESPECIALLY TRUE BECAUSE I MET YOU FIRST...
FINDING THE RIGHT PERSON IS CERTAINLY DIFFICULT...


THANKS FOR COMING, GIRLS.
Ohhh!
CONGRATS, AI...! YOU LOOK BEAUTIFUL!

OH, NO... THE GUY I HATE IS HERE.
DON'T TRY TO MAKE A PASS ON A MARRIED WOMAN, PLEASE.
JUST WHOSE WEDDING DID YOU THINK YOU CAME TO CELEBRATE?!

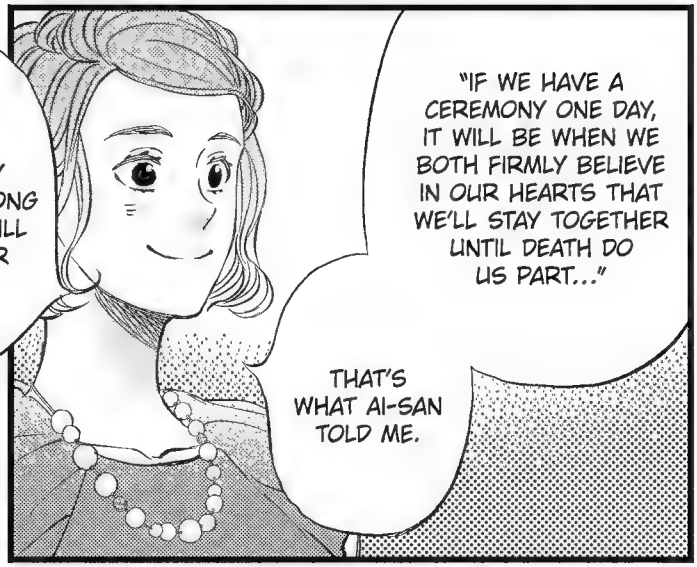

I BET YOU'RE THINKING, "TCH! HE'S JUST SOME LUCKY GUY ISHIMURA-SENSEI RANDOMLY DECIDED TO MARRY..."
"IF I WAS THE ONE WHO HAD MARRIED HER, THE MARRIAGE WOULD HAVE LASTED JUST AS LONG...", RIGHT?
HEH HEH!
Yay!
Yaaaay!

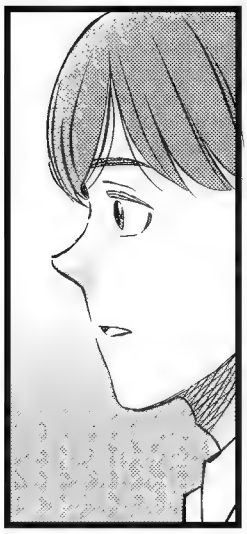
MARRIAGE WON'T LAST IF ONLY ONE SPOUSE IS PERFECT.
I THINK THE TWO OF YOU ARE A WONDERFUL MATCH.
...

BUT I DEFINITELY EXPECTED MOTHER TO BE MORE AVERSE TO DOING SOMETHING "TROUBLESOME" LIKE A WEDDING CEREMONY.
STILL, I'M SURPRISED... NOT SO MUCH BY FATHER...
REALLY?

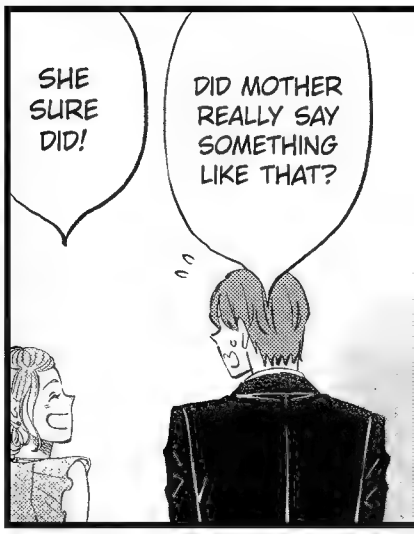
...I THINK THEY'RE GOOD FRIENDS.
WHY ARE THOSE TWO FIGHTING? ARE THEY ENEMIES?
What a coincidence... I hate you, too, Saiga-sensei.
But I still hate you, Kirishima-kun.
MAYU (SHIROU'S LITTLE SISTER)

SHE ALSO SAID, "AGE HARDLY MATTERS AS LONG AS WE CAN STILL DECLARE OUR LOVE..."


"IF WE HAVE A CEREMONY ONE DAY, IT WILL BE WHEN WE BOTH FIRMLY BELIEVE IN OUR HEARTS THAT WE'LL STAY TOGETHER UNTIL DEATH DO US PART..."
THAT'S WHAT AI-SAN TOLD ME.



I'M NOT SURE. THERE'S A GOOD CHANCE SHE ALREADY FORGOT ABOUT THAT CONVERSATION.
IS THIS THE RESULT OF THAT, THEN?
It was a really long time ago.


SHE SURE DID!
DID MOTHER REALLY SAY SOMETHING LIKE THAT?

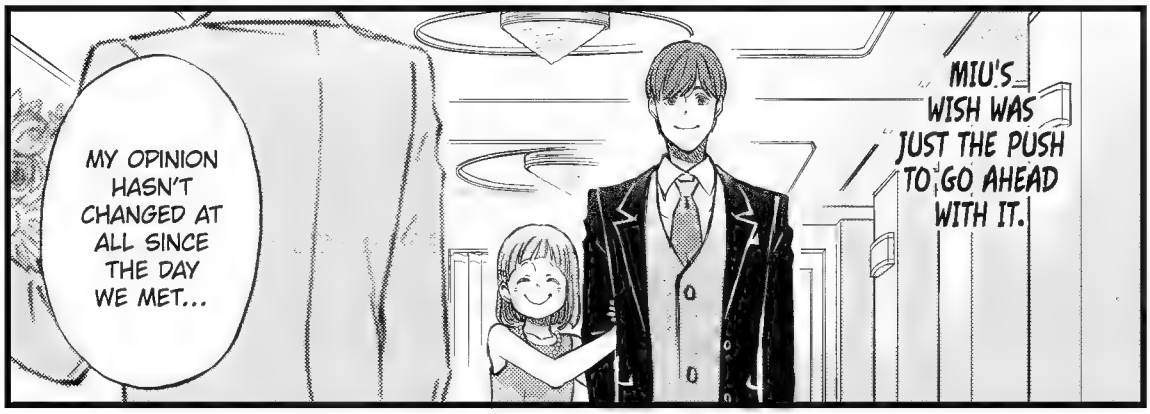
EVEN IF THIS WAS MIU'S WISH, KNOWING MOTHER'S PERSONALITY, IT WOULDN'T BE STRANGE IF SHE JUST FLATLY REJECTED IT WITH, "NOT A CHANCE. THAT'S TOO MUCH TROUBLE."

SHE DIDN'T AGREE BECAUSE IT WAS CHEAP...

HER DECISION TO INVITE SO MANY PEOPLE, WEAR A DRESS, AND HOLD THE CEREMONY IN A CHAPEL OF ALL PLACES, DESPITE THE FACT THAT THE MARRIAGE ITSELF OCCURRED OVER TEN YEARS AGO... IS TELLING.

THERE'S NO WAY MOTHER FORGOT.

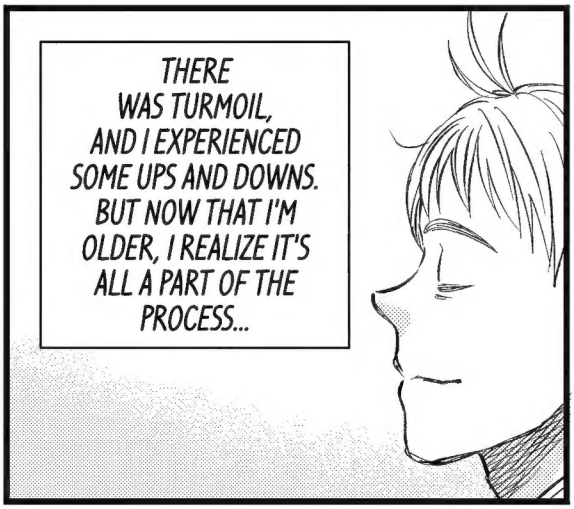
SHE'S A PERSON WITH AN INCREDIBLE MEMORY.

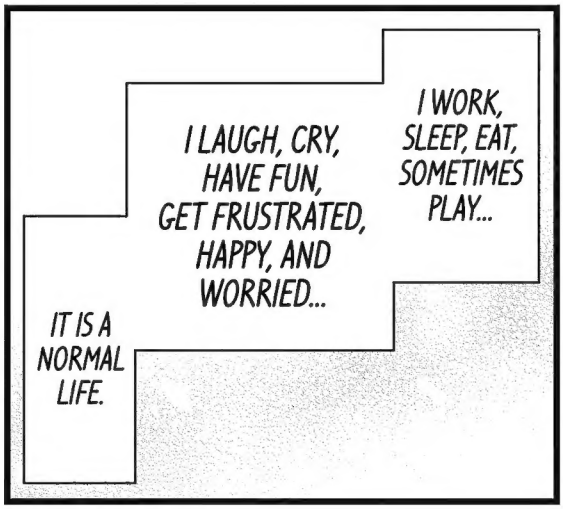


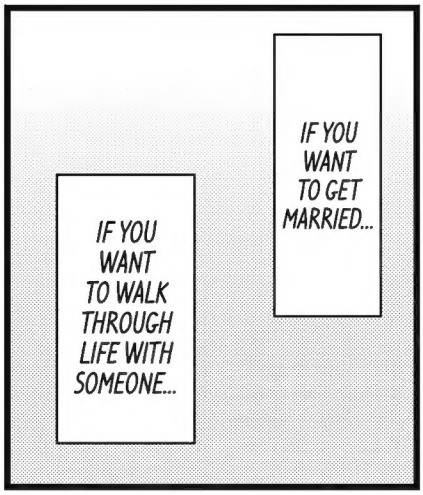
HELLO, HELLO, DEAR READER. AGAIN, IT HAS BEEN A LONG TIME. I AM KIRISHIMA SHIROU, A 37-YEAR-OLD CHILDCARE WORKER.

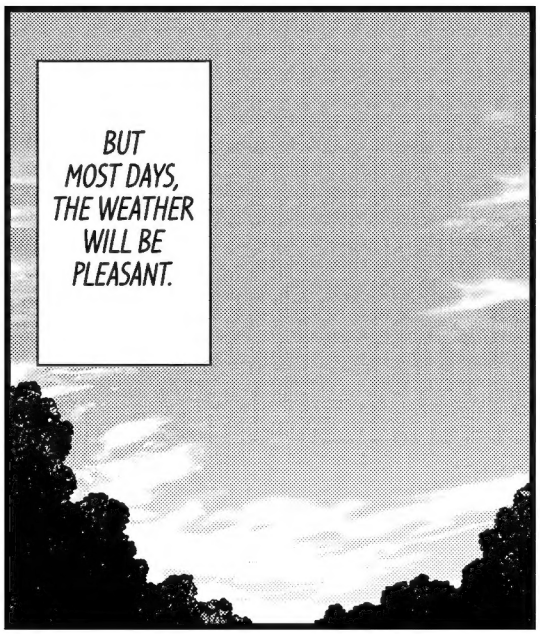
BEFORE I KNEW IT, THOSE TURBULENT DAYS THAT BEGAN WITH A SUDDEN LAYOFF WERE GONE...

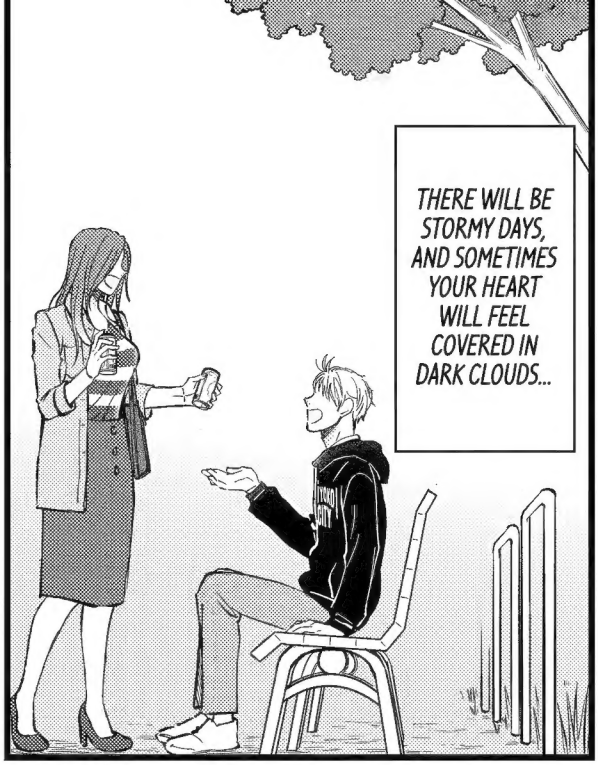
AND MY LIFE HAS BECOME NOTHING BUT ORDINARY.

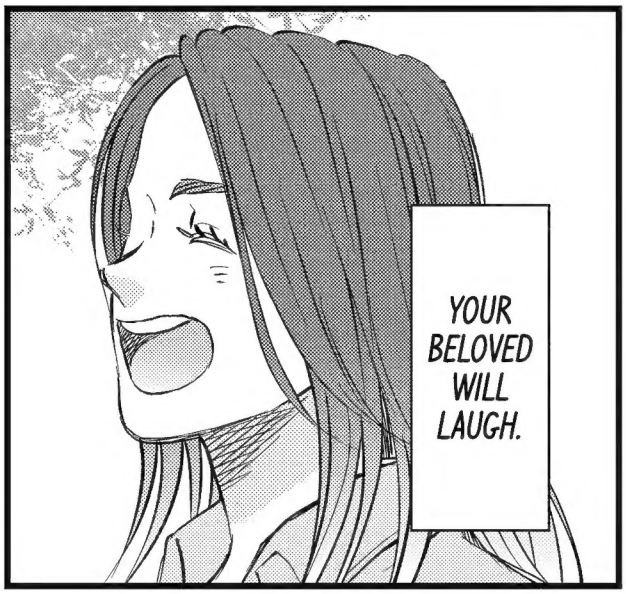




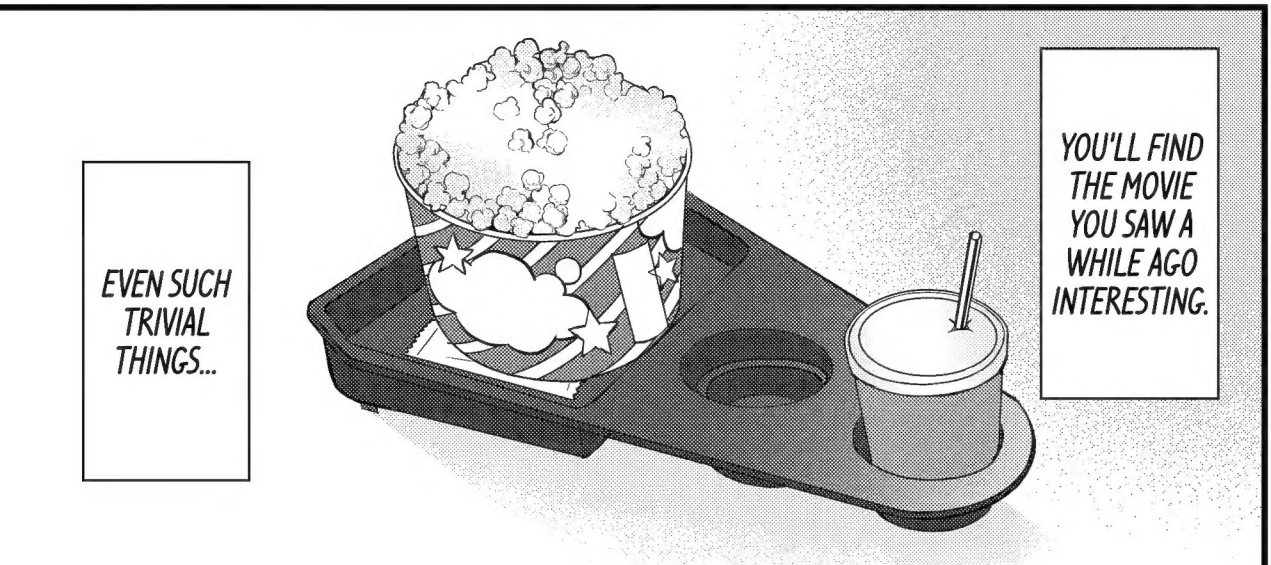


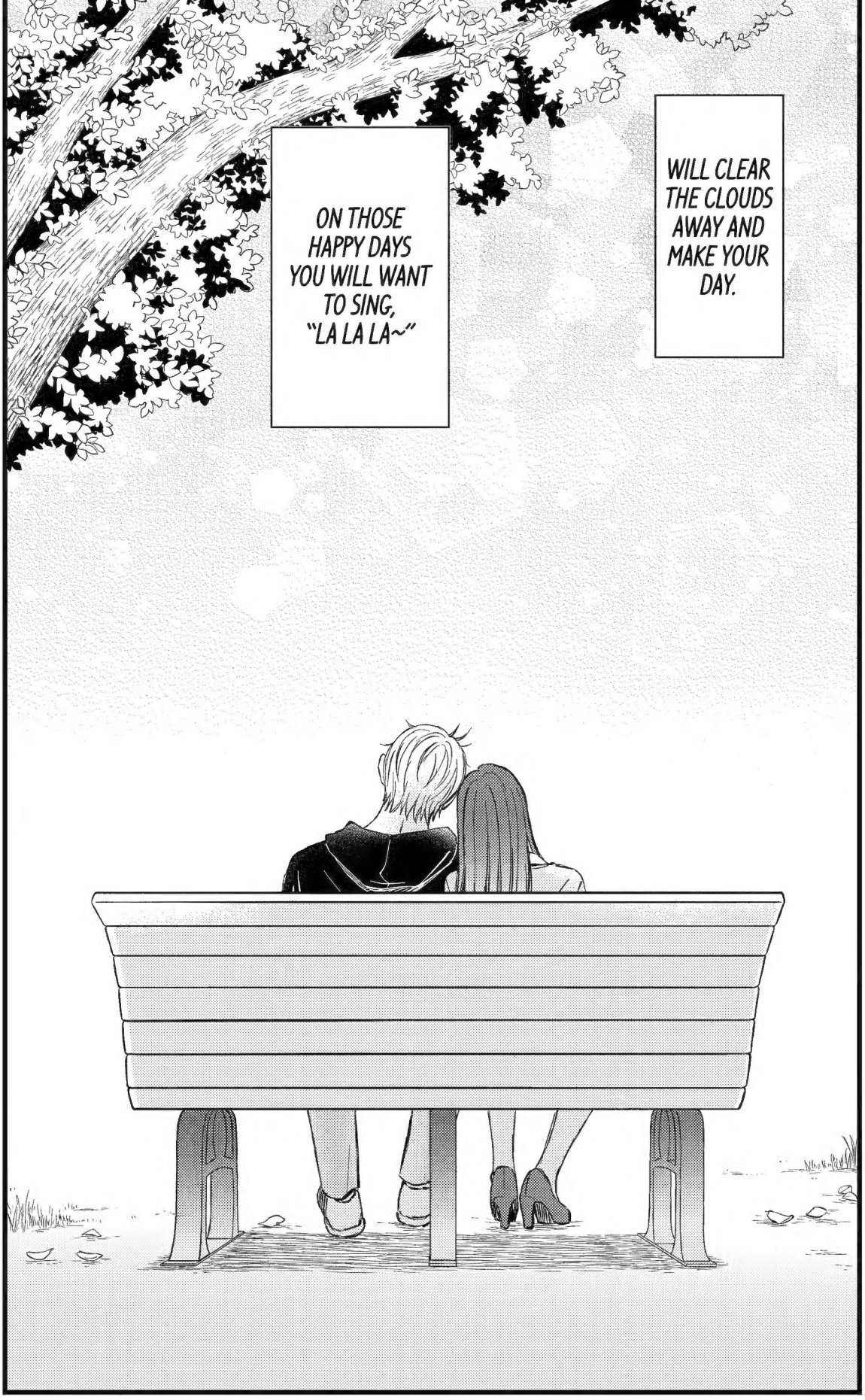

BUT MOST DAYS, THE WEATHER WILL BE PLEASANT.


THERE WILL BE STORMY DAYS, AND SOMETIMES YOUR HEART WILL FEEL COVERED IN DARK CLOUDS...


YOUR BELOVED WILL LAUGH.

THE COFFEE YOU DRINK WILL TASTE DELICIOUS.


EVEN SUCH TRIVIAL THINGS...
YOU'LL FIND THE MOVIE YOU SAW A WHILE AGO INTERESTING.


ON THOSE HAPPY DAYS YOU WILL WANT TO SING, "LA LA LA~"
WILL CLEAR THE CLOUDS AWAY AND MAKE YOUR DAY.